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ABSTRACT

The 1998 Annual Report of the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario includes messages from the ACAATO chair, Committee of Presidents Chair, and the Executive Director, as well as reports regarding: (1) advocacy and communications, with an update on government relations; (2) research and policy, which looks at physical infrastructure, learning technology, funding, degree granting options, and student assistance; (3) administration and operations, consisting of committee reports by the chair, presidents, and coordinating committees; (4) the Ontario College Application Service, which processes applications and acceptances, and serves applicants and guidance counselors; (5) the College of Ontario Network for Education and Training; and (6) financial statements, which cover current assets, operations and changes in net gains for 1997-98. This is the fifth annual report to summarize the association's progress toward the system-wide objectives of Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology. The 1998 overview indicates the association's responsiveness and adaptability to meet the needs of Ontario's communities. A total of 25 colleges serve 200 communities across Ontario with programming in English and French. Key performance indicators that measure the success of Ontario colleges are include the satisfaction of graduates employers, and students, as well as graduate rate and employment after graduation. (AS)

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

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MESSAGE FROM THE
ACAATO CHAIR

LESLIE WRIGHT
CHAIR
ACAATO

As chair of ACAATO, I am pleased to present this fifth annual report which summarizes the association's progress toward the system-wide objectives of Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology.

The year covered in this report — 1998 — was one that pushed forward with ACAATO's renewed mandate of advocacy and communication. Significant advances have already been made in this area, including publication of a well-received feature in October in *Maclean's* magazine.

That we have been able to achieve such early results is due to the hard work and co-operation of many within the college system. They are to be congratulated for assisting ACAATO in its mandate of advancing a strong college system for Ontario.

In fact, it is just this sort of co-operation that enables the college system to continue to thrive and serve the needs of the people and the economy of Ontario.

The ACAATO Executive and I welcome the opportunity of working with Governors and Presidents from across Ontario to provide crucial strategic leadership in meeting the many challenges of the future.

Leslie Wright
Chair
ACAATO

MESSAGE FROM THE
COMMITTEE OF PRESIDENTS CHAIR

DR. ROBERT (SQUEE) GORDON
CHAIR
COMMITTEE OF PRESIDENTS

Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology continue to be a driving force in Ontario's economy.

Quick, decisive and innovative responses to changing market trends and needs are a hallmark of the college system, as evidenced through an increasing number of partnerships with industry and a constant flood of new program offerings and curriculum updates.

Despite rapid change and tighter budgets, our goals remain to provide the people of Ontario with accessible, innovative, high quality programs that prepare them for the marketplace.

The Committee of Presidents continues to press government to recognize the vital role the college system plays, and to encourage it to consider our needs in five primary areas:

- changes to the funding formula;
- a more effective method of collective bargaining;
- a commitment to infrastructure renewal;
- flexibility in the rules that govern private sector partnerships;
- and the ability to award applied degrees in some of our programs.

We're all working hard to ensure that the people of Ontario have the college system they need given today's economic realities.

As chair of the Committee of Presidents, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of all members of the system who provide crucial leadership in these areas, as well as to those who work toward these goals on a day-to-day basis.

Dr. Robert (Squee) Gordon
Chair
Committee of Presidents

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1997-98 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ACAATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

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La Cité collégiale

*Members of these committees form the 10 person ACAATO Executive Committee

REPORT OF THE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JOAN HOMER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO) is the advocacy and marketing organization of Ontario's 25 colleges. The Association's mandate is to advance a strong college system for Ontario.

This report focuses on progress that has been made on ACAATO's core functions and priorities. More detailed information on ACAATO projects and operations is contained elsewhere in this report.

The transition of the ACAATO Secretariat to an advocacy bureau was completed this year. Qualified staff are now contributing to communications campaigns, such as pre-election, key performance indicators, recruitment and media relations.

During 1998, ACAATO started to see results of its new advocacy and communication strategy, produced sound research to support advocacy and provided policy development and networking opportunities for Ontario college leaders.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Advocacy and Communications Committee (of governors, presidents and public relations practitioners) has led the implementation of the Advocacy and Communications Strategy, approved following the ACAATO Review (May 1997). Agreed positions have been promoted to key target audiences.

ACAATO'S MANDATE IS TO ADVANCE A STRONG COLLEGE SYSTEM FOR ONTARIO

The profile of the Ontario colleges is growing each year, and this year was no exception. Media features, *Maclean's* cover stories, public polls and enrolment rates demonstrate the recognition colleges are receiving for 31 years of leadership in career education and training.

Below are some highlights of the 1998 advocacy effort:

- Focused advocacy campaigns, aligning central and grassroots efforts to address skills shortages, develop industry partnerships, initiate strategic investment and deregulation, reform apprenticeship, and increased student aid were well received. The Ontario Jobs and Investment Board Campaign was well co-ordinated.
- College system priority positions on infrastructure funding, fixed share funding formula, new enterprise models, applied degrees and improved human resource management models are widely recognized.
- The colleges' media profile, almost always positive, is increasing even in this difficult education environment. The October *Maclean's* cover story attracted wide interest, including prospective students.
- ACAATO publications, briefing notes, position papers, website bulletins and correspondence continue to receive positive response. These features are often sited among the most valuable member services.
- Approved communication strategy to begin advertising in major media has been well-received. *Maclean's* ads for Premier's Awards, cover feature and university issue received positive feedback.

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

A number of initiatives utilized ACAATO's strong research and planning capabilities, including:

- Co-ordination of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) project resulted in strong basis for implementation. Joint college/Ministry of Education and Training (MET) co-ordination continues as the system prepares for February 1999 results.
- Research and planning publications and labor market research continue to prove popular and are widely used both inside and outside the postsecondary education sector.
- Increased focus on policy development around General Assembly priorities, especially funding, funding formula, applied degrees and red tape reduction has also advanced the college position.

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

A variety of programs were undertaken over the past year, utilizing a wide range of expertise from within ACAATO and the colleges.

- Increased opportunities for General Assembly forums on priority issues, such as collective bargaining and funding, were provided throughout the year. As well, a Board Chairs Workshop was initiated and recommended as an annual August event.
- Cross-functional issues to address student financial aid, OSAP default, pre-admission testing, infrastructure needs, Bibliocentre, double cohort, degree-completion and federal/provincial labor market agreement input have been addressed through CAAT Co-ordinating Committee.
- ACAATO is increasingly called upon to manage system-wide projects, often in partnership: eg. School/College/Work Initiative, Literacy and Basic Skills, School Reform and Curriculum Validation.
- Secretariat information technology changes have improved client service and are Y2K viable.

ONTARIO COLLEGE APPLICATION SERVICE (OCAS)

- Application service improvements include Career Path, College-University Transfer Guide, Connexions, On Your Mark and Share. Software Site licences have been negotiated on behalf of colleges.
- The data warehouse framework has been developed and protocols for information use have been established.
- The Ross Finance and Human Resource Information Systems have been implemented in Group One colleges. Although the design stage of the Client Information System (CIS) has been completed, delays in the development stage have been significant. Integration of the CIS is currently being reviewed.

COLLEGES OF ONTARIO NETWORK FOR EDUCATION & TRAINING (CON*NECT)

- Over $1 million in new training business has been attracted to colleges through this college marketing alliance. There has been a significant increase in repeat business.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ACAATO's system-wide professional development, networking and decision making events, such as the Annual Conference, Leadership Development Institute, Governor Orientation Program and Presidents' Annual Strategic Planning Meeting, continue to be highly-rated.

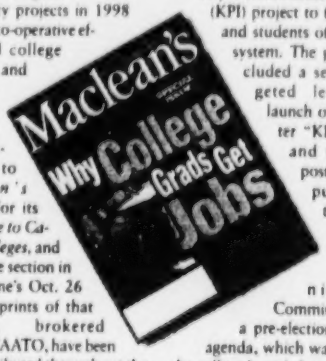
This overview of ACAATO's progress through 1998 provides a strong indication of the excellent responsiveness and adaptability of the association to meet the needs of Ontario's colleges, and the people we serve. Our appreciation is extended to all who have contributed to ACAATO's success.

Joan Homer
Executive Director

Advocacy and Communications

With an advocacy and communications strategy approved and in place for 1998, a search was conducted for a communications professional to carry it out. Stuart Watson, who brought a well-rounded track record from Halifax's Dalhousie University, was hired in August.

Advocacy projects in 1998 included a co-operative effort of all college marketing and communications offices to supply information to *Maclean's* magazine for its *1999 Guide to Canadian Colleges*, and for a feature section in the magazine's Oct. 26 edition. Reprints of that magazine, brokered through ACAATO, have been widely distributed throughout the system, to prospective students and to politicians.



It was in that magazine that the first of what will be a series of advocacy advertisements appeared. With the slogan "Ontario's colleges work... and so do our grads," the campaign was launched. The ad also appeared in *Maclean's* annual ranking of Canada's universities.

Communications projects also included working with the Ministry of Education to introduce the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) project to faculty, staff and students of the college system. The program included a series of targeted letters, the launch of a newsletter "KPI Express" and the use of posters at campuses across the system.

The Advisory and Communications Committee drafted a pre-election advocacy agenda, which was approved by college board chairs and presidents. Elements of this strategy began immediately, including grassroots efforts to address a variety of system-wide issues, while the remainder will be executed in the first half of 1999 in anticipation of a spring provincial election.

An identity program was also begun for CON•NECT that should position it more strongly in the marketplace.

ACAATO publications produced in the fall included the ACAATO Directory, Governor's Update, the ACAATO Environmental Scan and Mini Scan.

Government Relations

Ongoing government relations activities by the ACAATO secretariat and across the ACAATO system have continued with excellent results.

In addition to regular meetings with members of federal, provincial and local governments (including opposition members), some specific initiatives that were requested by ACAATO include:

- Funding: A two-year Ministry of Education and Training (MET) funding announcement made in January 1998. Funding will increase by one per cent in 1999.
- Ontario Jobs and Investment Board (OJIB): ACAATO submitted a formal paper to OJIB in December, entitled *Leading Through Learning in the 21st Century: A Human Resource Development Strategy for Ontario Prosperity*. A number of colleges also made presentations at OJIB consultation sessions.
- Deregulation: Boards of Governors were granted the authority to deregulate tuition fees for post-diploma and high income/job placement programs.
- Access to Opportunities Program: MET funded a 50 per cent increase in engineering and information technology programs in partnership with business.
- Strategic Skills Investment Initiative: The Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism earmarked $30 million to create partnerships to address skills shortages. Ten colleges were awarded grants in 1998, with the next round expected in February 1999.
- Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund: A MET initiative to double student scholarship funds raised by colleges and universities in 1997. In 1998, colleges were given an additional year of matching arrangement.
- ACAATO continues to work with MET on the Key Performance Indicators project.

Research and Policy

College priorities in a number of key areas required a strong role for ACAATO's research and policy:

Strategic Investment in Physical Infrastructure and Learning Technology

An advocacy fact sheet was prepared on this key advocacy area. It articulates the need for reinvestment in physical infrastructure and learning technology to support quality programming. Colleges are using its key messages in their local advocacy efforts.

Fixed Share Funding Formula

ACAATO's research and policy officer provided support in the development of material that demonstrates the need for a change from the existing model of funding on the basis of volume to one that supports access to quality education. The colleges continue their advocacy efforts with government to realize this change.

Flexibility for Innovation through Enterprise Models

In Fall 1998, a listing of legislated and MET reporting requirements was compiled. With the assistance of the colleges, this listing is being further refined to identify areas which could be streamlined or eliminated.

Degree Granting Options

Research into developments and initiatives around degree granting and college-university relations in other jurisdictions was undertaken and results shared with the colleges. The colleges continue their advocacy efforts to have specialty high-demand college programs recognized at a more advanced level.

Student Assistance

The availability of, and access to, student financial assistance is critical for the colleges' diverse profile of students. Data from the 1998-99 Environmental Scan revealed that approximately 60 per cent of applicants came from either the workplace or home for retraining. ACAATO continues to monitor federal and provincial governments on policy directions and changes.

Ongoing Research and Analysis Achievements

The fifth edition of the ACAATO Environmental Scan was released in Fall 1998. The 1998-99 edition builds on the feedback received from college stakeholders and is intended to serve as a springboard for individual college's strategic planning processes. The demand for this valuable resource continues to increase. Over 1,200 copies are in circulation in addition to the online edition available on the ACAATO web site.

Highlights from the 1998-99 Edition include:

- The value of a college education continues to grow in profile: 35% of respondents in a July 1998 opinion poll chose a college diploma in a technical education as the type of education to most likely lead to employment. A further 24% chose apprenticeship programs;
- Traditional, on-campus students are increasingly accessing distance education courses as a way of easing busy schedules and balancing responsibilities. The need for flexible and customized programming continues to increase; and
- With increased tuition fee setting flexibility, the OSAP maximum allowable limit for tuition and incidental fees and the availability of financial assistance will be increasingly important considerations for colleges, especially given the higher proportion of married and sole support students in colleges.

1999 Mini Scan

The Mini Scan was printed in December 1998 and approximately 4,000 copies were distributed in early January 1999. The value and utility of this handy pocket reference of college information is demonstrated through the many requests for additional copies.

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ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACAATO EXECUTIVE

The ACAATO Executive consists of five Board Chairs and five Presidents (Committee of Presidents Executive) from various regions. They develop the agenda, objectives and desired outcomes for the General Assembly.

As approved by the General Assembly in October 1998, the ACAATO Executive developed the colleges' priorities paper entitled *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario: Achievements and Opportunities.*

COMMITTEE OF PRESIDENTS

The Committee of Presidents (COP) provides operational leadership to college system-wide priorities including OCAS and CON*NECT. COP is chaired by Dr. Robert Gordon (1998-99), president of Humber College.

COP Priorities include:

- fixed share funding formula,
- applied degrees,
- strategic investment in physical infrastructure,
- new enterprise models,
- improved human resources management model.

BOARD CHAIRS WORKSHOP

The board chairs met for two days in August 1998 to discuss key college system governance issues, the rebuilding of the colleges after the last two years of funding cuts, and to develop system-wide strategic priorities for 1998-99. The chairs established new directions to ensure that quality, access, responsiveness and accountability of the colleges continue.

The Board Chairs Workshop was the first to include incoming, outgoing and ongoing board chairs. The workshop also met the objectives of assisting new chairs to gain an understanding of their role as board chair and strengthen their network.

CAAT CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Chaired by Loyalist College President Doug Auld (1997-98) and Fanshawe College President Howard Rundle (1998-99), the 15-member CAAT Co-ordinating Committee is made up of two representatives from each of the five co-ordinating committees and representatives from the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ontario Council of Regents, the Ontario College Application Service and ACAATO.

25 COLLEGES SERVE 200 COMMUNITIES ACROSS ONTARIO WITH PROGRAMMING IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

The committee met six times, addressing system wide issues such as the Key Performance Indicators project, OSAP default rates, Performance Requirements and Student Support. Four key task forces were established: Pre-admission Testing; Double Cohort Task Force; Validation of High School Curriculum; College University subgroup.

- The Bibliocentre mandate was reconfirmed after an intensive cost-effectiveness study.
- Two successful system-wide Human Resource Development projects were approved (Leadership Development Institute and Teacher Education Program).
- Discussion and advocacy strategies were developed on current Ontario Basic Skills Funding, Apprenticeship Reform and Federal/Provincial Labor Market Development.
- Discussions continue on red tape reduction for legislated and non-legislated board responsibilities for information reporting.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Administrative Services Co-ordinating Committee co-ordinates issues related to the effective administration and support of college facilities and activities.

Priorities and objectives for 1998 included:

- leading senior administrator input to funding formula revision, performance funding and banking and investment policy;
- monitoring impact of Year 2000 issues, Ontario College Client Information System project, tuition fee policy and financial reporting guidelines; and
- continuing focus on inter-institutional resource sharing.

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE ON STUDENT SERVICES

The Co-ordinating Committee on Student Services (CCSS) provides leadership to the college system on all aspects relating to student services and student development. It is one of the five CAAT co-ordinating committees that reports to the Committee of Presidents.

In 1998, CCSS:

- ensured that the needs of Ontario college students are reflected in the development of student financial assistance policies at the federal and provincial levels.
- developed, with college financial aid administrators and the Committee of Registrars, Admissions and Liaison Officers (CRALO), joint college system/MET task forces to: develop the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) accountability framework and performance guidelines for the colleges; develop publication guidelines for OSAP-related information required by MET to be published by the colleges; and provide recommendations relating to MET's objectives to reduce OSAP default rates to 10 per cent.
- contributed a strong student services perspective to the development of Key Performance Indicators.
- facilitated submission to the Committee of Presidents of a proposed new governance model and operation for the Bibliocentre.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Training and Development Co-ordinating Committee is responsible for co-ordinating issues related to the enhancement of existing training services and to the colleges' commitment to the development of

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Ontario college system is at the vanguard of the public sector in spearheading an outcomes-based, funding-linked performance measurement mechanism.

Jointly, the colleges and the Ministry of Education and Training (MET) have implemented a systematic process of data collection toward establishing annual performance measures across five key performance areas:

- graduate employment,
- graduate satisfaction,
- employer satisfaction,
- student satisfaction,
- graduate rate.

A college/MET steering committee was constituted to guide this initiative through its implementation. Representatives include eight from the colleges, one from the board of governors, one from the Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association, as well as MET staff. Two college staff were seconded to work with MET on the implementation team.

The benefits of the KPI initiative include:

- providing students with the opportunity of influencing the learning environment by way of regular feedback.
- providing students with the ability to make an informed program choice;
- ensuring more job-ready graduates;
- making programs stronger, healthier and more viable.

Pilot surveys for graduate employment, graduate satisfaction, student satisfaction and employer satisfaction were conducted in the fall semester. As well, nearly 32,000 April '98 college grads were surveyed. Additional surveys were to be conducted in 1999.

A program of communication to members of college communities about KPI included quarterly newsletters, a website hosted by ACAATO, posters and targeted letters.

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MINISTER VISITS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly is comprised of board chairs and presidents of member colleges and sets the strategic direction of ACAATO.

The Minister of Education and Training, David Johnson, met with the General Assembly on Oct. 21 and invited the board chairs and presidents to identify key change initiatives that would assist the colleges to further enhance their widely-respected contribution to economic development throughout Ontario.

The General Assembly discussed the development of an action plan for the Ontario colleges in order that the board chairs and presidents take the lead in determining the colleges future. The General Assembly approved that ACAATO undertake an inclusive review of all dimensions of collective bargaining, exploring the alternative models, and to recommend an appropriate process. A report was to be presented to the General Assembly on Feb. 13, 1999.

DAVID JOHNSON, MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING, SPOKE TO BOARD CHAIRS AND PRESIDENTS AT OCTOBER'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The General Assembly also agreed to develop a position paper within a broader context to focus on strategies that would include human resource management models, increased flexibility and freedom from Schedule III restrictions, as well as degree granting options.

The General Assembly also endorsed a pre-election communications strategy developed by ACAATO's Advocacy and Communications Committee. The strategy's key messages are: Colleges create jobs; Colleges provide value for investment; and, Colleges support community economic development.

new initiatives and markets.

1998 highlights include:

- Market Perception Study: An employer satisfaction survey was conducted in Dec. 1998; results were to be released in Feb. 1999.
- Business Practice Project: A manual regarding practices employed by colleges in contract training and related market driven activities has been developed, with the assistance of 18 colleges.
- Professional Development: Annual meetings of each operating committee provide opportunities for professional development. The Provincial Contract Training network conference in June 1998 provided a variety of workshops related to the development of market driven products and services.
- The college system is feeling the impact of legislated changes in the Employment Insurance (EI) Act. The cessation of block training purchases and the implementation of Skills Loans and Grants will alter the way programs and services are delivered to EI clients. The absence of an agreement creates uncertainty for colleges and clients alike. T&DCC is actively participating on several key MET committees related to Labor Market Development Agreement development and implementation.
- Contract Training Network: This committee was instrumental in the development of the Client Satisfaction Survey, the Business Practices Project, the Professional Development Conference and ongoing support to CON*NECT.
- Ontario Colleges International Committee: Thirteen colleges have financially supported the development of a business plan which will be reviewed in Feb. 1999.
- Apprenticeship: Active through 1998 in the discussion and planning related to apprenticeship reform, including participation in a variety of MET/college committees that are planning the changes to apprenticeship delivery in Ontario.

ONTARIO COLLEGES WORK, AND SO DO OUR GRADS. THE EMPLOYMENT RATE FOR GRADS EXCEEDS 85%, AND IN SOME PROGRAMS, REACHES 100%.

INSTRUCTION/PROGRAMS CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Instruction/Programs Co-ordinating Committee (IPCC) membership includes the academic vice-president from each college in the system. It is responsible for providing leadership to the system on all academic aspects, including programming, instruction, delivery nodes and academic changes for both the postsecondary and non-postsecondary areas.

The IPCC heads a reporting structure that includes Co-op Ontario, Heads of Applied Arts, Heads of Technology, the Educational Technology Co-ordinating Committee, Heads of Business, Heads of Language, Heads of Health Science and Heads of Continuing Education.

In 1998, IPCC:

- led the academic change consultation process on college program issues;
- explored degree granting, degree completion and full cost recovery programming for colleges;
- took part in the development of Key Performance Indicators to ensure they reflect both the academic and fiscal realities of system-wide programming;
- provided advice to postsecondary school reform;
- ensured that each college had an opportunity to consult on college-university partnerships.

HUMAN RESOURCES CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Human Resources Co-ordinating Committee (HRCC) reviewed a number of issues in 1998 including:

Human Resource Information System (HRIS) development: There are concerns regarding the integration of HRIS with the eventual Client Information System. The long-term implications appear uncertain, causing several human resources departments to assess their options.

Administrative staff salary administration: The delay by the Minister to approve new salary scales for administrative staff is negatively affecting morale in most, if not all, colleges. Human resources directors are working on implementation concerns, and a sub-group of the committee will continue to work with the Council of Regents in implementation issues.

Pay Equity: Most colleges report progress in meeting their pay equity objectives.

CAAT Pension Plan: HRCC maintains a close working relationship with the administrators of the plan and together are working on a number of issues, such as the entitlement rights of staff who are not full-time.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING/ACAATO APPRENTICESHIP REFORM STEERING COMMITTEE

Formed in July 1998, the committee co-ordinates consultation on the apprenticeship reform process, a government priority through Bill 55. The group advises on the in-school portion of the apprenticeship program and works with sub-groups on program quality, accreditation, tuition and financial aid.

The process of federal/provincial negotiations on a labor market agreement is also monitored due to its significance to the colleges as lead training providers in Ontario.

Led by Assistant Deputy Minister Joan Andrew and Niagara College President Dan Patterson, the committee includes representation from the Ministry of Education and Training, Training and Development Co-ordinating Committee, apprenticeship groups and the ACAATO Secretariat.

The Apprenticeship Reform Transition process has been uneven since July as Bill 55 has been challenged by some industry sectors. The bill was approved in late December with several amendments. Transition negotiations with the federal government are proceeding.

There appears to be sufficient funding to meet demand for 1999; however, colleges will likely request a revision to per diems.

College-University Consortium Council (CUCC)

Global and domestic economic and socio-political shifts require that Ontario's postsecondary sector respond to new market demands for highly skilled workers. The achievement of a renewed vision for postsecondary education calls for the collaboration of the colleges, the universities, the Ministry of Education and Training and their various constituencies. The CUCC is a meeting-place for ideas and a forum for colleges and universities to discuss key issues and options leading to policy development.

When the CUCC was inaugurated in 1996, its purpose and mission were to facilitate, promote and co-ordinate joint education and training ventures that will: aid the transfer of students from sector to sector; facilitate the creation of joint programs between colleges and universities; and, further the development of a more seamless continuum of postsecondary education in Ontario.

Activities attached to the CUCC's initial mandate were:

- the updating of the Ontario College-University Transfer Guide (OCUTG), extending its function beyond a catalogue of current agreements;
- sponsorship and support of 15 collaborative projects, representing all major disciplines and geographic regions in Ontario, in order to reveal both the barriers and the incentives for collaboration as well as effective strategies;
- a symposium which provided opportunities for senior officers in colleges and universities to learn about the results achieved by the projects, discuss the issues arising, and propose next steps;
- a study of student movement patterns from colleges to universities and universities to colleges between 1986 and 1996 to help assess the demand for articulation and collaborative programs.

The CUCC achieved all of the goals established for its first two years' of operation and negotiated a revised mandate for a third year.

The first phase of the Ontario College-University Transfer Guide website (www.ocutg.on.ca) was inaugurated on Dec. 1, 1998. This project was sponsored by the College-University Consortium Council in partnership with the Ontario College Application Service and the Ontario Universities' Application Centre.

This searchable database provides information to users about Ontario-based credit transfer policies and agreements and collaborative programs. All universities and most colleges have posted entries to the database which contains more than 1,300 agreements. During the second phase of the development of the OCUTG, each college will create a webpage for their institutional website that will add descriptions of the agreements they have with out-of-province institutions.

Secondary School Curriculum

Providing college perspectives concerning draft curriculum for Ontario's secondary schools is a major thrust of this committee.

It also focused on the specific curriculum adjustments required to enhance student preparedness for colleges in general, and for specific college programs and related careers. As well, it was established to improve pathways to college for secondary school students.

The college's academic vice-presidents contributed to this project.

As a result, there has been greater alignment of secondary school and college curriculum and a greater alignment of exit-level competencies and entry level expectations in colleges.

More than 138,000 full-time postsecondary students were enrolled in 1998; a 33% increase since 1990

School/College/Work Initiative

The School/College/Work Initiative (SCWI) is the first initiative managed collaboratively by the Committee of Presidents and the Council of Directors of Education of Ontario. It has funded nine pilot projects that focus on one or more of the three outcomes essential to providing secondary school students with clear pathways to college and employment.

Presentations on secondary school reform and the implications for colleges have been made to the heads of applied arts, technology, business, language, health sciences and access, as well as to the Committee of Registrars, Admissions and Liaison Officers. Presentations also have been made to most of the colleges on secondary school reform and the secondary school curriculum validation process.

Literacy and Basic Skills College Sector Committee

The Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) College Sector Committee (CSC) assists MET's Workplace Preparation Branch and leads the college system in the creation of provincial resources, procedures and standards related to the development and delivery of relevant adult preparatory programs and services.

In 1998, progress and activities included:

- MET reconsidered and revised proposed 1999-2000 LBS funding model resulting in decreased negative impact on colleges;
- college input reflected on final MET guidelines for LBS Program;
- Workplace Preparation Branch participation at all CSC meetings;
- all colleges registered on AlphaPlus Discussions;
- What Counts as Evidence research report and video distrib-

La Cité hosts ACAATO's 23rd Annual Conference in Ottawa

The 1998 ACAATO conference, which was held in Ottawa and hosted by La Cité collégiale, provided a networking opportunity for more than 300 college leaders.

Featured speakers included: Derek Burney, President, Chairman and CEO of Bell Canada International and former Canadian Ambassador to the U.S.; Noranda Chair Courtney Pratt on the market opportunities for Ontario colleges in the knowledge economy; professor John Roueche on college leadership in the privatization age; Huguette Labelle, President of the Canadian International Development Agency, who gave the Sisco Address on "Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century: Canadian Community Colleges in the Global Village."

John Roueche

Courtney Pratt

Huguette Labelle

Derek Burney

The ACAATO banquet and Premier's Awards ceremony celebrated outstanding alumni.

Premier's Award winners were:

- Larry O'Brien, Chairman and CEO of Calian Technology (Algonquin College);
- Marlene Conway, President and CEO of Envirolutions Inc., (Mohawk College);
- Dr. Kenneth Schneider, Radiation Oncologist (St. Clair College); and
- Steve Williams, Computer Animation Specialist and Academy Award Nominee (Sheridan College).

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uted to all literacy programs;

- What Counts as Evidence Phase 2, Delivery Model Identification and Cross Sectoral Demonstrations Projects begun;
- 1999-2000 funding for three projects confirmed;
- hiring of college personnel on provincial projects;
- provincial co-ordinators met in November at ACAATO.

Governors' Orientation Program

The orientation program introduces new governors to the college system, structure and current policies. It outlines the role of board members and their liability and examines the critical issues in effective board functioning. It also helps to develop a support network among new board members from different colleges.

In 1998, 55 governors from 20 colleges attended one-day workshops offered at Sault, Loyalist and Mohawk colleges, as well as at the ACAATO office.

Leadership Development Institute '98

The Leadership Development Institute (LDI) offers a unique system-wide leadership development opportunity, custom-made for today's rapidly changing, technology-driven learning environment. Unlike traditional development programs, LDI engages its participants in team-oriented experiences that directly address the immediate strategic needs of the college system.

Participants in LDI '98 are faculty, support staff and administrators from 20 different colleges. They worked on five different projects which were to be highlighted at the ACAATO annual conference in Feb. 1999 under the title "Innovations 2000."

The project titles are:

- The Competitive Advantage: Student Customer Service Outside the Classroom;
- College Readiness for Change Survey;
- Implementation of Information Technology into Teaching and Learning;
- Innovative College Partnerships; and
- Empowering Students in the Pursuit of Effective College-University Linkages.

Since 1990, provincial government funding has dropped 42%; the general purpose operating grant accounts for 40.4% of revenue

CAAT Pension Plan

The successful transfer and administration for the Retirement Compensation Arrangement (RCA) from the Council of Regents to the CAAT Pension Plan was carried out in 1998.

Members of the ACAATO Executive, Chair of the Human Resource Management Steering Committee and members of the Council of Regents met with the employer representatives of the CAAT Pension Plan Sponsors Committee and Board of Trustees in October 1998 in order to share ideas and perspectives. As a result of the meeting, a pension advisory committee has been established to liaise with, and provide advice to, the employer representatives of the CAAT Pension Plan Sponsors Committee and Board of Trustees. The membership of the advisory committee will consist of governors and senior college administrators knowledgeable in pensions.

Paul Owens, Plan Manager and CEO of the CAAT Pension Plan, and Bruce Hodgson, an employer representative of the CAAT Pension Plan Sponsors Committee, met with the General Assembly in October to update the board chairs and presidents on the pension plan and possible plan amendments.

Board Chairs & Presidents (1998)

Board Chairs and Presidents (1998)

Algonquin College
Anthony Manera, Chair
Robert Gillett, President

Collège Boréal
Jacques Saint-Pierre, Chair
Gisele Chrétien, President

Cambrian College
Susan Bloomfield, Chair
Frank Marsh, President

Canadore College
Dan Longlade, Chair
Timothy McTiernan, President

Centennial College
Leslie Wright, Chair
Catherine Henderson, President

Conestoga College
Sandra Hanmer, Chair
John Tibbits, President

Confederation College
John Walker, Chair
Roy Murray, President

Durham College
Sharon Young, Chair
Gary Polonsky, President

Fanshawe College
Arthur Pearson, Chair
Howard Rundle, President

George Brown College
Patricia Hatt, Chair
Frank Sorochinsky, President

Georgian College
Leonard Yauk, Chair
Bruce Hill, President

Collège des Grands Lacs
François Benoit, Chair
Robert Mayrand, President

Humber College
Ratna Ray, Chair
Robert Gordon, President

La Cité Collégiale
René Bouchard, Chair
Andrée Lortie, President

Lambton College
Leonard R. Carey, Chair
Terry Blundell, President

Loyalist College
Dorothy Davies-Hindall, Chair
Douglas Auld, President

Mohawk College
Jim Bethune, Chair
Catherine Rellinger, President

Niagara College
Thomas Gauld, Chair
Dan Patterson, President

Northern College
Judith Shanks, Chair
Noella McNair, President

Sault College
Patrick McAuley, Chair
Gerry McGuire, President

Seneca College
Susanne Eden, Chair
Stephen Quinlan, President

Sheridan College
Glenna Carr, Chair
Sheldon Levy, President

Sir Sandford Fleming College
Debra Cooper Burger, Chair
Brian Desbiens, President

St. Clair College
Rev. Joseph Redican, Chair
John (Jack) McGee, President

St. Lawrence College
Wilse Hatfield, Chair
Dan Corbett, President

ACAATO Secretariat (1998)

Joan Homer
Executive Director

Gary Cronkwright
Director, CON*NECT

Kathie Droy, Lead
Governor & Presidents Services

Frank Foster
Sales Consultant, CON*NECT

Betty Lagogianes
Sales Consultant, CON*NECT

Julie Marsh
Research and Policy Officer

Irveen Powley
Executive Assistant

Karen Richard
Information Technology and Conference Services

Stuart Watson
Director, Communications

Cheryl Wrixon
Co-ordinator, CON*NECT

Lorraine Maitland
Project Support, CON*NECT**

Karie Au
Accountant **

**part-time

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OCAS ▸ Ontario College Application Service

The Ontario College Application Service (OCAS) provides administrative systems and application processing services for the 25 colleges of applied arts and technology, the three agricultural colleges and the Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences.

This central organization also provides information technology leadership to the college system and serves as a data repository and clearing house for the colleges.

Its mandate is to provide timely, cost-effective, client-focused, technology-driven, high-quality solutions which address the collective needs of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario.

Key participants, constituents and partners included:

- College administrators and staff;
- Secondary school and non-secondary school applicants;
- Guidance counsellors;
- Ministry of Education and Training;
- Technology partners including Sybase, Sun, Cognos.

OCAS:

- supports college registrars and admissions staff in providing a timely, efficient and cost-effective application and acceptance processing service;
- supports college liaison, recruitment and promotion activities;
- provides systems brokering and support for colleges' client, financial and human resources information systems;
- benefits college applicants by providing one-stop service when applying to colleges;
- provides information and support to guidance counsellors who assist their college-bound students;
- provides system-wide data to colleges, the Ministry of Education and Training, Statistics Canada and others; and
- makes the latest technology available at low cost for college administration and curriculum needs.

Applications Processing

- OCAS processed 157,000 applications and 99,000 acceptances to college offers of admission for the 1997-98 application cycle while streamlining processing procedures for secondary school applications.
- More detailed information is being provided to college admissions staff as part of the International Credential Evaluation Service, with an increase of 12 per cent in the number of transcripts evaluated.
- A new phone system with more incoming lines and more applicant services staff (including six bilingual staff) to respond to inquiries has enabled better customer service.
- Including an application form in the applicant guidebook has simplified colleges' distribution to non-secondary school applicants.

Services to Applicants and Guidance Counsellors

- Improved form and publications; more and better CommuniCAAT for all grade 12 students.
- Improved online application with more than 5,000 users so far.
- OCAS' website received 842,545 hits and 108,484 individual visitors during 1998.
- The CareerPath website (www.careers.ocas.on.ca) was launched on Oct. 30, with 40 profiles (and more to come) of successful college graduates. So far, there have been more than 77,500 hits to the site .
- The Ontario College-University Transfer Guide website (www.ocutg.on.ca) was launched on Dec. 1, providing details of more than 3,500 transfer agreements and collaborative programs between Ontario's colleges and universities.

Ontario College Common Information Systems

With the assistance of OCAS, in 1998, seven colleges successfully implemented the ROSS Financial Information Systems with another six scheduled for implementation in 1999.

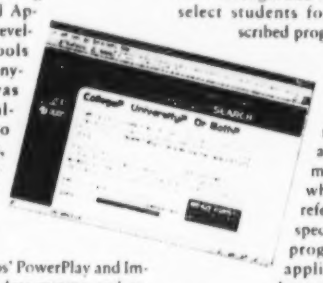
Four colleges implemented the ROSS Human Resources Information Systems with another five scheduled to implement the systems in 1999.

Working with college staff from several areas, including registrars, admissions and information systems, significant progress was made in 1998 toward developing specifications for common client information systems. However, late in the year, the project experienced considerable setbacks resulting in significant implementation delays. A new direction and time frame for the CIS project will be established early in 1999.

Global Site Licences and Training

On behalf of the colleges, OCAS brokered site licences with the following vendors:

- INFOSILEM's timetabling program for both program and course-based registrations was made available free to the colleges.
- SYBASE's PowerStudio Suite, including Java Rapid Application Development tools and SQL Anywhere, was made available free to the colleges, for administrative and academic purposes.



- Cognos' PowerPlay and Impromptu, data-mining and report-writing tools, which will be particularly valuable for use with the ROSS FIS and HRS systems, including administrator and end-user training sessions, were made available free to all colleges.
- Symantec's Visual Café, Java development software, was made available free to all colleges.
- Platinum's LanDesk Management Suite, was made available at low cost to all colleges.
- SRC's Budget Advisor module which works in concert with the ROSS FIS system, was made available free to all colleges.

System-Wide Data

OCAS established the beginnings of the colleges' Data Warehouse, including applicant, application and enrolment data. A Data Warehouse Users' Group will advise the Data Warehouse project team and extensive user consultation sessions are planned for early 1999.

Market share reports on secondary school and non-secondary school applicants were distributed to all colleges, providing valuable information for college recruitment activities.

Research and Development

OCAS developed ConneXions!, a powerful new computer tool that manages the various activities of a typical teaching/learning environment and frees teacher and learner to focus on tasks directly related to learning. Six colleges are currently piloting the software which is available free of charge to all colleges.

On Your Mark, a software application developed within the colleges to assess student readiness for college programs, is the product of a collaboration among OCAS, the Ontario Colleges Mathematics Association and several colleges. On Your Mark can be used to identify students who are "at risk" so that alternative placements can be offered. It will also diagnose areas of strength and weakness, or select students for oversubscribed programs.

Unique to On Your Mark is its use of a multivariable assessment model, which can be referenced to a specific college program. The application has been programmed in Java, making it available through the Web free of charge to all colleges. Four colleges are currently using the software.

Awards, Special Events, Recognition

- OCAS was honored with the ROSS Systems Renaissance CS Leadership Award in special recognition of online knowledge repository design achievement.
- The CareerPath website received the Best of the Planet People's Choice Award, the New Key Site Award for excellence in web design and is listed as one of the Best Canadian Family Safe Web Sites in The Canadian Eh? Net Directory.

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Established in 1994, the Colleges of Ontario Network for Education and Training (CON*NECT) is a marketing alliance committed to building strategic partnerships with business, industry and government.

CON*NECT's profile continues to grow as employers province-wide discover the advantages of the convenient access to the education and training resources of the 25 Ontario colleges, and the efficient, centralized project management that CON*NECT provides. The projects highlighted below are typical of the training initiatives which CON*NECT has managed on behalf of the college system.

Ministry of the Environment

CON*NECT has worked with a number of government ministries, but it is the longstanding relationship with the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) which most clearly demonstrates the benefits of partnership.

MOE has repeatedly sought the assistance of CON*NECT in fulfilling its environmental protection mandate. CON*NECT/Ontario Environmental Training Consortium has managed the Water/Wastewater Operator and Licensing Facility Classification Program for MOE since 1993. CON*NECT and MOE have worked together to introduce a number of efficiencies and streamline the complexities of the certification process involving 2,400 water and wastewater facilities and 7,200 utility operators.

Water is also the focus of another smaller contract to ensure that Ontarians have access to safe drinking water. Since spring 1998, on MOE's behalf, CON*NECT has administered the Small Seasonal Drinking Water systems correspondence training program for campground and resort operators and their staff.

CON*NECT was also the successful bidder for an MOE project involving the design and delivery of training in Health and Safety basics for ministry field staff. The program, developed and delivered by Cambrian College's Northern Ontario Centre for Advanced Technology, was recently expanded to include additional MOE staff.

The colleges are helping Ontario to 'drive clean' as CON*NECT and MOE work together on this new initiative.

MOE again turned to CON*NECT for assistance with a significant air pollution control initiative — the Drive Clean program — that will introduce mandatory emissions testing for domestic and commercial vehicles. CON*NECT co-ordinated the first phase of the Drive Clean Challenge Examination process for automotive technicians. In November, 1,400 technicians wrote the one-time challenge examination at one of six college locations in the Greater Toronto area and in Hamilton.

MOE turned to CON*NECT for assistance with the Drive Clean program

The Drive Clean program also includes a comprehensive training component to enable technicians to obtain certification as emissions specialists. CON*NECT promoted the college delivery network with MOE, and Centennial College was named the lead college for this delivery phase. Durham and Mohawk Colleges have also been contracted to offer a variety of Drive Clean training programs. This project is expected to generate revenue of $2.1 million over 3 years for the three colleges offering this training.

Ontario Aerospace Council

CON*NECT's advocacy role is especially noteworthy in the aerospace sector. The relationship between the Ontario Aerospace Council (OAC) and the colleges continues to develop since CON*NECT completed a needs assessment for OAC early in 1997. Algonquin, Mohawk, Niagara, Sault and Sheridan Colleges were contracted to develop and deliver curriculum for Phase 1 of the Aerospace Industry Training Program (AITP) as a follow up to that needs assessment.

Getting CON*NECTed offers new options to professional associations

The OAC is also working with CON*NECT to develop a new training program for the aerospace sector.

With the launch of Phase II of AITP, OAC has approached CON*NECT for assistance with this multi-faceted training project. The goal is to enhance the global competitiveness of Ontario's aerospace sector.

CON*NECT advances the profile of Ontario colleges as contract training suppliers

Through CON*NECT, OAC will access the training expertise of the colleges, integrate prior learning assessment into the program design, and expand program accessibility to other areas of the province. The $2.2 million funding for the project has been provided by the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism within the Strategic Skills Investment Program.

Professional Associations

Professional groups in Ontario are also discovering the benefits of working with CON*NECT to bring innovative opportunities to their constituents. Ontario's legal community was the first to realize the advantages of accessing the college delivery network through CON*NECT. Since November 1996, CON*NECT has co-ordinated three satellite videoconferences sponsored by the Canadian Bar Association Ontario, and the Law Society of Upper Canada, and a fourth is planned for May 1999. An affiliated group, the Lawyers' Professional Indemnity Company also worked with CON*NECT to provide specialized computer software training to more than 4,000 lawyers and their staff across the province, a project which involved 19 colleges.

Ontario Aerospace Council & CON*NECT are developing a new training program

Getting CON*NECTed offers professional associations new options in bringing services to their members. Several other professional groups are partnering with CON*NECT on training solutions that meet tomorrow's needs today. The Canadian Professional Sales Association worked with CON*NECT to introduce an accelerated certification model for their members. The three-day "Skills for Sales Success" program, already delivered in several college locations, is an effective and convenient alternative to less concentrated approaches to professional designation.

The Canadian Payroll Association also turned to a CON*NECT solution to expand access to their training. An intensive six-week program in Payroll Administration is currently under development for pilot delivery in the spring at Centennial College, after which the model will be expanded to other college locations. In addition, the Association of Web Professionals is marketing a five-day program in Web Site Management and Performance for delivery at several college locations.

Although a selective list, these training initiatives nevertheless provide clear evidence of the success of CON*NECT. As we move toward the new millennium, CON*NECT will continue to advance the profile of the Ontario colleges as contract training suppliers. The 1999/2000 CON*NECT Business Plan has identified two strategic directions: effective advocacy on behalf of the college system, and continued business development with both established and new clients.

A survey on client satisfaction was undertaken in 1998 for release at the 1999 ACAATO conference. The results are very positive and will provide an excellent foundation for these activities.

In 1999-2000, CON*NECT's increasing maturity and success will be heralded with the introduction of a distinct CON*NECT logo and a new promotions package and strategy.

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Financial Statements

The following is a summary of ACAATO's 1998 financial statements, which includes the operations of the Association, the Secretariat, Colleges of Ontario Network for Education & Training (CON*NECT) and Ontario College Application Services (OCAS). Detailed financial information is available at the ACAATO office, Suite 1010, 655 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 2K4.

Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 1998, with comparative figures for 1997	1998	1997
Assets		
Current Assets	$ 6,241,729	$ 7,823,129
Capital Assets	3,940,692	481,363
Total Assets	10,182,421	8,304,492
Liabilities, Deferred Contributions and Net Assets		
Current Liabilities	2,811,443	2,310,826
Deferred Contributions	3,094,210	-
Net assets	4,276,768	5,993,666
Total	10,182,421	8,304,492

Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31, 1998, with comparative figures for 1997	1998	1997
Revenue	8,316,005	7,589,199
Grants	3,144,229	-
Total Revenue	11,460,234	7,589,199
Expenses	10,177,132	5,301,658
Excess of revenue over expenses	1,283,102	2,287,541

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year ended March 31, 1998, with comparative figures for 1997	1998 Total	1997 Total
Balance, beginning of year	5,993,666	3,706,125
Excess of revenue over expenses	1,283,102	2,287,541
Distributed to member colleges	(3,000,000)	-
Balance, end of year	4,276,768	5,993,666

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1998 ▸ THE YEAR IN REVIEW

JANUARY 5

Colleges respond positively to Ministry of Education and Training (MET) announcement of two-year funding stability and the introduction of tuition deregulation in certain programs — two 1997 ACAATO advocacy priorities.

JANUARY 26

Committee of Presidents confirm applied degrees necessary credential in qualified college programs.

FEBRUARY 22, 23

La Cité hosts gala ACAATO Conference evening in Ottawa. John Roueche advises college leaders on the future of community colleges. Fifty outstanding alumni are recognized in Premier's Awards ceremony.

MARCH 5

ACAATO sponsors Lorna Rosenstein, General Manager, Lotus Canada, in address to Toronto business leaders.

MARCH 9

Committee of Presidents approves province-wide human resource management projects in teacher education and in leadership development for faculty, support staff, administration and students.

MARCH 10

School/College/Work initiative announced by Ministry of Education and Training to increase awareness and preparedness of secondary school students regarding college programs; co-managed by the Council of Directors of Education and the Committee of Presidents.

APRIL 3

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education PhD program in college leadership established. First class to include 25 college leaders.

APRIL 6

Pre-election year advocacy strategy designed by Advocacy and Communications Committee "to turn up the heat" for college advancement.

APRIL 15

Key Performance Indicator recommendations from joint ACAATO/MET task group approved to implement first accountability system in Ontario public sector.

APRIL 16

College Board Chairs and Regents meet to review key system issues for advocacy action.

MAY 5

Ontario Budget announces Access to Opportunities and Strategic Skills investment projects in response to industry and Council of Ontario Universities/ ACAATO advocacy.

MAY 25

ACAATO Chair Leslie Wright, Canadore Board Chair Bob Kennedy and ACAATO Executive Director Joan Homer present Governor's Role in Advocacy Workshop at ACCC Conference in Winnipeg.

MAY 27/28

"This is IT" (Information Technology) Conference hosted by Centennial College links 400 faculty and staff in sharing best practices in learning and college information technology.

MAY 28 - 30

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, meet to draft education vision; profile of colleges is high as provider of career education and training.

JUNE 1

Ontario College Application Service makes final preparation to initiate Human Resource and Financial Information Systems in stage one colleges; trials under way.

JUNE 21 - 24

ACAATO's 16th Leadership Development Institute attracts 40 faculty, support staff and administration leaders from 20 colleges to Kempenfelt, directed by Algonquin's Pierre Giroux.

JULY 7

MET/ACAATO Apprenticeship Reform Task Group established.

JULY 8

College Committee on Advancement meets with *Maclean's* representatives to provide input on *Guide to Canadian Colleges* to be published in January 1999.

AUGUST 26, 27

Inaugural Board Chairs Workshops was held at ACAATO to identify governance priorities for 1999.

AUGUST 28

Tentative agreement reached with the academic bargaining unit following 2.5 years of negotiations and avoiding a strike in the colleges.

OCTOBER 4 - 6

Committee of Presidents Annual Planning Meeting identifies infrastructure investment, fixed share funding formula, enterprise models, applied degrees and improved human resource management models as 1999 action priorities.

OCTOBER 21

Ministry of Education and Training David Johnson meets with Board Chairs and Presidents at Humber College to discuss colleges' advancement priorities. Recognition of colleges as contributors to economic development was received.

OCTOBER 26

Maclean's magazine cover story, "Why College Grads Get Jobs," published.

OCTOBER 26

First of four Governor Orientation Program Workshops, facilitated by Pierre Giroux for over 50 governors held at ACAATO. Other hosts; Sault, Loyalist and Mohawk. This is the fifth year of this successful orientation and networking program.

OCTOBER 30

CAAT Co-ordinating Committee meets with Ministry of Education and Training regarding student financial aid.

NOVEMBER 2

ACAATO Curriculum Validation Proposal approved by Ministry of Education and Training to ensure new secondary school curriculum articulation with college programs.

NOVEMBER 23

College system articulation agreement approved with University of West Sydney, Australia; first provincial wide agreement recognizing college graduates.

NOVEMBER 27

Ontario Jobs and Investment Board hosts seventh Premier's Conference on Jobs and Prosperity. High profile for colleges; ACAATO response to OJIB released in preparation for government pre-election strategy setting.

DECEMBER 7

ACAATO position paper *Leading in the Global Economy: Achievements and Opportunities* released to Ministry of Education and Training and internal/external communities.

DECEMBER 14

Media release announces Key Performance Indicator surveys of graduates and employers; strong public interest in college/MET initiative.

DECEMBER 17

Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism awards strategic skills funding for seven major projects involving Ontario colleges.

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